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ABSTRACT

A 60-item questionnaire measuring believed effects of sensitivity training, evaluations of these effects, and logical inconsistencies of respondents is presented. The questionnaire was developed from phrases describing sensitivity training found in newspaper articles written during a week of intense publicity following an incident at a local high school. (Author)

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A Questionnaire Evaluating Perceived Effects of Sensitivity Training

Daniel L. Kegan

May 1970

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A Questionnaire Evaluating Perceived Effects of Sensitivity Training

by

Daniel L. Kegan

Northwestern University

During a study (Kegan, 1970) of a high school system reacting to severe adverse publicity concerning a sensitivity training incident, the author became aware that sensitivity training was no longer of interest solely to social scientists. It is increasingly becoming a legal and political issue. It is suggested that objective data from a rigorously designed poll would be desirable to further detail what segments of the population have which conceptions of sensitivity training.

As part of the high school study, the author developed a questionnaire to survey attitudes toward sensitivity training. Although use of the questionnaire at the school was not permitted, it is presented here as a possible contribution toward a study of public attitudes and sensitivity training.

Phrases describing effects or results of sensitivity training were identified from the newspaper articles on sensitivity training written during the crisis week. Many more negative or harmful phrases than positive or beneficial phrases were found in this analysis. To obtain a balanced questionnaire, the author had to write several positive effect items to be paired with specific negative effect items. Three "control" items were included: makes better drivers (29), encourages dieting (36), and promotes capitalism (53, part of a triad with items 10 and 32). In addition to this questionnaire, standard demographic questions and questions concerning sensitivity training and the schools were prepared.

The items were paired to form bipolar choices (Morrison, Campbell, & Wolins, 1967). Since it was hypothesized as likely that some people would hold logically inconsistent beliefs (especially since sensitivity training was an emotionally involved controversy), the pairs were separated yielding Likert-type items. Each item was randomly ordered; however if the second item of a pair received a random number within ten of the first item, another number was chosen to make all items from pairs at least ten items apart.

This form of the questionnaire provides a considerable amount of data: believed effects of sensitivity training, evaluation of each item, and logical inconsistencies can be determined. If a briefer form in necessary, the number of items may be reduced or the instructions can be changed to ask only for evaluations of those items which are believed to be the results of sensitivity training.

To obtain summary indices, the sixty items may be partitioned into three sets: positive, negative, and control.[1] The first score, Effects, would consist of the total number of positive effects checked / the total number of negative effects checked / and the total number of control effects checked. For example, 25/6/1. The second score, Evaluation, would consist of the sum (counting A as 5, a as 4, ? as 3, b as 2, and B as 1) of positive item evaluations / the sum of the negative item evaluations / and the sum of the control item evaluations. For example, 107/45/5.

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insert figure 1 about here

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References

Kegan, D. L. Unanticipated and planned consequences of a sensitivity training intervention in a high school system. Education, 92, 2, 54-67, December 1971.

Morrison, D. G., Campbell, D. T., & Wolins, L. A fortran program for evaluating internal consistency and single-factoredness in sets of multilevel attitude items. Evanston, Illinois: Vogelback Computing Center, Northwestern University, 1967.

Footnotes

[1]This partitioning will, of course, be influenced by the researcher's own value system. This author would put items 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 26, 30, 31, 32, 37, 39, 40, 41, 43, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 52, 54, and 58 into the positive set; items 29, 36, and 53 into the control set; and the remaining twenty-eight items into the negative set.

Figure 1

Instructions

In the following list, please first check (in the left hand column) those items which you believe are the results of sensitivity training or are related to sensitivity training. Then after completing the list, for every item, circle (in the right hand column) whether you

A - strongly approve
a - approve
? - are indifferent
d - disapprove
D - strongly disapprove

of that result or related thing. Although several of the items are related, each is different and should be answered independently, without concern for the answers to other items. Work quickly down the list.

Sensitivity training:

1___	lets an individual solve his personal problems	A a ? d D
2___	requires leaders with emotional and personal maturity	A a ? d D
3___	makes worse students	A a ? d D
4___	strengthens people so that they can better face the world	A a ? d D
5___	is an experience in living	A a ? d D
6___	widens the generation gap	A a ? d D
7___	helps a teacher function more effectively	A a ? d D
8___	is dangerous	A a ? d D
9___	is a religious experience	A a ? d D
10___	promotes communism	A a ? d D
11___	breaks down all inhibitions	A a ? d D
12___	makes people more lonely than before	A a ? d D
13___	fosters disrespect for others	A a ? d D
14___	encourages caution	A a ? d D
15___	creates neurotics	A a ? d D

16___results in learning new ways of manipulating others A a ? d D
17___results in greater self-confusion A a ? d D
18___improves communication skills A a ? d D
19___permits better understanding of others A a ? d D
20___reduces loneliness A a ? d D

21___is an educational experience A a ? d D
22___destroys individuality A a ? d D
23___results in more open, honest communication A a ? d D
24___encourages risk-taking A a ? d D
25___makes students less receptive to classroom learning A a ? d D

26___encourages trust A a ? d D
27___is a brainwashing technique A a ? d D
28___turns people into manipulated zombies A a ? d D
29___makes better drivers A a ? d D
30___narrows the generation gap A a ? d D

31___requires leaders with professional, academic qualifications A a ? d D
32___promotes democracy A a ? d D
33___fosters isolation, separateness A a ? d D
34___promotes Black-White antagonism A a ? d D
35___is a preparation for living A a ? d D

36___encourages dieting A a ? d D
37___creates honesty A a ? d D
38___impairs communication skills A a ? d D
39___builds community A a ? d D
40___strengthens self-discipline A a ? d D

41___lets the individual become more innovative A a ? d D
42___encourages sexual promiscuity A a ? d D
43___is safe A a ? d D
44___creates dishonesty A a ? d D
45___makes people feel more comfortable with others A a ? d D

46___makes students more receptive to classroom learning	A a ? d D
47___lets a person become more of an individual	A a ? d D
48 __promotes Black-White understanding	A a ? d D
49___fosters respect for others	A a ? d D
50___impairs a teacher's functioning	A a ? d D
51___softens people so they are less able to face the world	A a ? d D
52___encourages appropriate sexual behavior	A a ? d D
53__promotes capitalism	A a ? d D
54___makes better students	A a ? d D
55___encourages suspicion	A a ? d D
56___requires no one special for a leader	A a ? d D
57___makes people feel less comfortable with others	A a ? d D
58___results in greater self-awareness	A a ? d D
59___is anti-religious	A a ? d D
60___permits more misunderstanding of others	A a ? d D

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